

July 15 | Sunday

Age of Independence

Read [Galatians 5:1, 13-25](#)



16 | Mon – Two kinds of freedom | Read [Galatians 5:1](#)

On July 4, we celebrate the freedoms that came in 1776 when this country's forefathers declared their independence from Britain. Every time you participate in holy Communion, you declare to yourself and to the world that Jesus has set you free from slavery to sin. Where have you experienced that truth in your life? Are there still areas that you need to find greater freedom? Ask Jesus Christ to show you how - he is the great emancipator!

17 | Tue – Freedom for what? | Read [Galatians 5:13-15](#)

Does freedom mean you can do whatever you feel like doing? Most of us would say no. Freedom gives us the right to rule ourselves and it also comes with responsibilities toward others. Paul reminded the church at Galatia of Jesus' words "love your neighbor as much as you love yourself" (Matt. 22:39). How have you chosen to 'limit' your freedom because of how your actions would affect another person? How have others done the same for you?

18 | Wed – Self | Read [Galatians 5:16-18](#)

Everyone is born with a nature that tends toward self-centered thinking and selfish living. We say someone is becoming mature when they exhibit unselfish attitudes and choices. But it can be a battle. When we try live more like Jesus, our natural self sometimes resists. How do you handle those times when you avoid doing what God wants you to do because it is too hard or inconvenient or might require a sacrifice on your part?

19 | Thu – A check-up | Read [Galatians 5:19-21](#)

Paul gives some examples of a sinful nature unrestrained and then reminds us that we have a choice. Do you see something on this list that has been or might still be a problem for you? Think of this as a spiritual check-up, like your annual physical. And please be honest with yourself. Nothing can be resolved until it is acknowledged. What you cannot do, regardless of your determination to change, the Holy Spirit will help you overcome as you are obedient.

20 | Fri – Another list | Read [Galatians 5:22-23](#)

The more time you spend with someone the more you are influenced by their attitudes and actions, even adopting them as your own. (Is that why your parents told you to choose your friends wisely?) The same is true of the person who spends time getting to know God. As the Holy Spirit changes your heart, your actions and attitudes reflect that change. As you compare this list with yesterday's, where have you seen the most growth in your own life? And where can you ask the Holy Spirit to help you grow deeper?

21 | Sat – How to live free | Read [Galatians 5:24-25](#)

Someone once said that laws and regulations are only necessary where moral character fails. While we have the freedom to choose how we will live, only the Spirit of God can help us live the way we were originally designed, in right relationships with God and with others. We do so by crucifying our old selfish nature (by saying no to self) and then asking the Holy Spirit to help us live according to God's good plan. That is the path to real freedom.